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BOROUGH OF BEWDLEY

Annual Reports

OF

Medical Officer of Health and Sanitary Inspector

FOR

1952

Printed by The Telford Press, Bewdley. Tel. 2164

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WATER AND HEALTH COMMITTEE

Alderman R. B. JACKSON (Chairman).

Councillor Mrs. D. L. LAWRENCE, C.C. (Mayor)

Alderman H. N. FROST, J.P., C.A. (Deputy Mayor).

Alderman P. W. PALMER

Councillor Mrs. F. S. PRITCHARD

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Councillor E. J. FINCH

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Councillor B. INCE

Councillor W. E. JAMES

OFFICERS

DR. R. W. MARKHAM, B.A., M.B., B.Ch., D.P.H.
Medical Officer of Health

MR. S. J. ROWE, M.Inst.R.A., F.Inst.Hsg.,
Cert.R.S.I. and S.I.E.J.B.
Borough Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector

MR J. N. PITTS, Cert. R.S.I. and S.I.E.J.B. Sanitary Inspector

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS

OF THE

BEWDLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report on the Health of the Borough for the year 1952.

In accordance with instructions from the Ministry of Health, the report is divided into the following sections :—

"A" Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

"B" General Provision of Health Services for the Area.

"C" Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

"D" Housing.

"E" Inspection and Supervision of Food.

"F" Prevalence of and Control over Infectious Diseases.

SECTION "A"

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area

Area (in acres)	3,681
Number of inhabited houses(end of 1952) according to Rate Books	1,498
Rateable Value	£20,788
Sum represented by One Penny Rate	£82/5/3
Registrar General's estimate of resident population (mid 1952)	4,833

Industry within the Borough of Bewdley is on a small scale, the principal source of local employment being a factory processing animal feeding stuffs, seeds, fertilisers etc., and where 70 persons were employed during 1952.

Other sources of employment include a small light engineering works, and saw mills, and, remaining from the traditional Bewdley industries, a brass foundry, rope works and leather works.

Vital Statistics for the Area

Live Births

	1952			*1951*		
	Total.	*Male.*	*Female*	*Total.*	*Male.*	*Female.*
Legitimate	69	36	33	71	36	35
Illegitimate	3	3	—	1	1	—
	72	39	33	72	37	35

The Live Birth rate per 1,000 estimated population of the Borough was: 1952 14.89 (1951 14.68).

The Live Birth rate for England and Wales was: 1952 15.3 (1951 15.5).

Still Births

	1952			*1951*		
	Total.	*Male.*	*Female*	*Total.*	*Male.*	*Female.*
Legitimate	2	1	1	3	2	1
Illegitimate	—	—	—	—	—	—
	2	1	1	3	2	1

The Still Birth rate per 1,000 births (Live and Still) was: 1952 27.02 (1951 40).

The Still Birth rate per 1,000 births for England and Wales was: 1952 22.6.

The Still Birth rate per 1,000 estimated population in the Borough was: 1952 0.413 (1951 0.612).

The Still Birth rate per 1,000 estimated population for England and Wales was: 1952 0.35 (1951 0.36).

Deaths

1952			*1951*		
Total	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
59	32	27	86	43	43

The Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated population was: 1952 12.21 (1951 17.54).

The Death rate for the whole of England and Wales was: 1952 11.3 (1951 12.5).

Maternal Mortality

There were no deaths of mothers associated with childbirth during the year.

The Maternal Mortality rate per 1,000 of the estimated population was: 1952 Nil (1951 Nil).

The Maternal Mortality rate for the whole of England and Wales was 1952 0.72 (1951 0.79).

Deaths of Infants under 1 year

	1952			*1951*		
	Total.	*Male.*	*Female*	*Total.*	*Male.*	*Female.*
Legitimate	2	—	2	4	3	1
Illegitimate	—	—	—	—	—	—
	2	—	2	4	3	1

The Infant Mortality rate was: 1952 27.7 (1951 55.55).

The Infant Mortality rate for England and Wales was: 1952 27.6 (1951 29.6).

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	11
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	—
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	—
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	—

Causes of Death

Ref. No.		*Male.*	*Female.*
1, 2.	Tuberculosis	—	—
3.	Syphilitic Disease	—	—
10, 11, 14.	Cancer	7	4
15.	Leukaemia, aleukaemia	—	2
17.	Vascular Lesions of the Nervous System ...	5	3
18, 19, 20.	Heart Disease	10	9
21.	Other circulatory disease	1	1
22.	Influenza	—	1
24.	Brochitis	4	2
26.	Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum	1	—
28.	Nephritis and Nephrosis	1	—
32.	Other Defined and Ill-defined Diseases ...	—	4
33.	Motor Vehicle Accidents	2	—
34.	All other accidents	1	1
	Total	32	27

SECTION "B"

General Provision of Health Services for the Area

Bacteriological examinations of samples taken from producers and manufacturers, and all chemical examinations of food, milk and water are carried out by the Worcestershire County Council Laboratory. Bacteriological examinations of consumer samples of milk, water and ice-cream are undertaken by the Public Health Laboratory of the Worcester Royal Infirmary, in addition to the routine clinical pathology.

Ambulance Service

This is provided by the Worcestershire County Council as Local Health Authority, and is based on Kidderminster.

Home Nursing and Health Visiting

There are two District Nurses available in the Borough, one each for Bewdley and Wribbenhall. There is also one wholetime Health Visitor.

Clinics

An Ante-natal Clinic is held once a fortnight in the Wribbenhall Parish Room, a doctor being in attendance monthly.

An Infant Welfare Clinic is also held fortnightly with a doctor in attendance monthly, when Diphtheria immunisation and vaccination are carried out.

Hospitals

The following hospitals administered by the Midland Regional Hospital Board are available:

1. The Kidderminster General Hospital for general medical and surgical cases.
2. The Blakebrook Infirmary.
3. The Hayley Green Isolation Hospital for Infectious Diseases.
4. The Lucy Baldwin Maternity Hospital at Stourport.
5. The Croft Maternity Home.

Tuberculosis

(1) *Treatment*

A dispensary is held twice weekly at the Kidderminster General Hospital, and there are Sanatoria at Knightwick, and at St. Wulstans, Malvern.

(2) *Prevention and After-Care*

Prevention of this disease is the responsibilty of the County Council and is carried out under the direction of the County Medical Officer.

An After-Care Sub-Committee administers this service in this district in conjunction with the other districts in the Kidderminster Divisional Area.

Venereal Disease

A treatment centre is operated at the Kidderminster General Hospital by the Regional Hospital Board.

Domestic Help Service

Under arrangements made by the Local Health Authority, Home Help Service has been established in the district and is administered locally by the Women's Voluntary Service.

Section 47, National Service Act, 1948

No action has been taken by the Council under this section during the year.

SECTION "C"

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area

Water Supply

1. The water supply has been satisfactory both in quality and quantity.
2. Samples of water for bacteriological analysis are taken monthly and for complete chemical analysis twice yearly.
3. The water is not plumbo-solvent.
4. No action was necessary for any form of contamination of the piped water supply.

5a. The number of houses supplied from the public water mains direct to houses is 1,431. Population served approximately 4,684.

5b. 49 houses are supplied from standpipes; population served approximately 160. 18 houses obtain water from private supplies; population served approximately 59.

Extension of Supply

The existing 3″ water main in Trimpley Lane was extended a distance of 210 yards so as to serve part of the Council Housing Estate at Springhill.

Drainage and Sewerage

The greater part of the district has a sewer available. Sewage is pumped to the Disposal Works used jointly by the Borough of Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn Urban District Council and the Borough of Bewdley.

Investigations into the cause of the breakdowns which occurred at the main Pumping Station during the latter part of 1951, were continued but no complete and satisfactory reason was found. A penstock was fitted at the entrance to the screening chamber to facilitate cleansing. The two pumps were repaired and recommenced operating on the 18th March and 29th May, and appeared to be working satisfactorily until the 8th December, 1952, when it was noticed that further damage had occurred to both pumps. Engineers from a number of firms have made inspections and at the end of the year, with both pumps out of service, exhaustive tests and investigations were being carried out in an endeavour to determine the causes of these continual breakdowns.

Apart from the difficulties at the Pumping Station, no serious nuisance has arisen concerning the drainage system in general. Five existing properties and 19 new dwellings were connected to the main sewer during the year.

Towards the end of the year, discussions were in progress with an owner who is proposing to build a house at the upper end of Spencer Avenue. He is willing to construct a 6″ sewer along the length of Spencer Avenue and connect to the main sewer in Kidderminster Road. Every encouragement will be given for this work to proceed, so that the houses in the Avenue may connect to this private sewer and so eliminate a considerable proportion of the dumbwells and pail closets now remaining in the Borough.

SECTION "D"

Housing

Seventeen houses were completed by the Corporation during the year. Two houses were completed by private enterprise.

At December 31st, 1952, there were 258 applications for Council Houses. As mentioned in my report for 1951 a revision of the housing list was effected during the year, and the present number represents a considerable reduction on the figure of 431, which was the number of applications on the list on December 31st, 1951.

With regard to the development of Springhill Estate, the remaining 17 houses out of the 22 houses in Contract No. 1 were completed and occupied.

Most of the preliminary work in the layout and design of Contract No. 2, comprising the construction of roads, sewers and the erection of 36 dwellings has been completed, and it is anticipated that works will commence in the early months of 1953.

The need for the revision of the Rent Restriction Acts has been receiving Parliamentary attenion and whilst it is realised that any amending legislation providing for rent increases will not be generally appreciated, it is hoped that a fair and practicable answer will be found to the problem of the repair of old and unfit dwellings.

Camping Sites.

All the camping sites are inspected regularly by the Health Department staff, and no serious nuisance was discovered during the year.

There are now three sites authorised under both the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 and the Public Health Act 1936. These are at :—

(1) The Brant Farm, Stourport Road.
(2) Butt Town Meadow, Northwood Lane.
(3) Council Hill Camp, Cleobury Road

and allow for a combined total of 187 caravans.

Planning permissions for these sites required the compliance with a number of conditions relating to layout, removal of structures other than roadworthy caravans, provision of suitable sanitary accommodation, and other matters, and some progress has been made in this respect.

Enforcement action under the Town and Country Planning Act has been taken, whenever possible, to secure the removal of structures from unauthorised sites. Five owners of structures, and one site owner appealed to the Minister, and a public enquiry was held in December, 1952. The Minister's decision is awaited. In most other cases the Enforcement Notices require the removal of all unauthorised structures by 30th September, 1953 .

SECTION "E"

Inspection and Supervision of Food

This work was carried out by the Sanitary Inspector during the year. See Sanitary Inspector's Report.

Food Poisoning

There was no outbreak of food poisoning during the year.

SECTION "F"

Prevalence of and Control Over Infectious Diseases

Diphtheria Immunisation

The number of children immunised during the year either at Clinics, Schools or by the General Practitioners, was as follows:—

1.	Aged 0 - 4 years inclusive	36
2.	Aged 5 - 14 years inclusive	17
3.	Reinforcing doses	43
	Total ...	96

At the end of 1952 the percentage figures of immunised children estimated in the two age groups 0 - 4 and 5 - 14 were 53.3% and 60% respectively. (Based on the Registrar General's figures for the child population for 1951.)

No cases of diphtheria were notified during the year.

Notifications

Cases of Infectious Diseases notified during the year are shewn the following table:—

Disease	*Total Cases Notified.*	*Cases admitted to Hospital.*	*Deaths Total*
Scarlet Fever	11	4	—
Measles	40	—	—
Whooping Cough ...	12	—	—
Acute Pneumonia	8	—	1

Tuberculosis

The following table gives particulars of new cases of Tuberculosis and deaths from the disease in the area during the year.

Age Periods.	*NEW CASES.* Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary.		*DEATHS.* Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	M.	*F.*	*M.*	*F.*	*M.*	*F.*	*M.*	*F.*
0	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
20	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 & up	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
	3		—		—		—	

Conclusion

The services provided in the Borough remain satisfactory

The pumps at the Main Sewage Pumping Station have given further trouble, the cause of which has not been traced despite a most careful investigation by the Borough Surveyor in conjunction with several acknowledged experts in this field who were asked for their advice. The effectual drainage of this area, however, has been maintained.

I am sorry to have to report that it has been possible to do very little for the many ageing and partly unfit properties in the district beyond the minimum of patching. Little more seems possible until fresh legislation alters the situation.

I should like to thank the Mayor, Members of the Council, and the Council's Staff for their help and co-operation during the year.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

R. W. MARKHAM,

Medical Officer of Health

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT

For the Year Ending 31st December, 1952

Housing

Private Enterprise. Two houses were completed during the year.

Corporation. Seventeen houses were completed during the year.

The Medical Officer of Health has already reported on the progress made with the development of Springhill Estate.

Squatters Camps. I am pleased to report that during the year three of the nissen huts at Blackstone were vacated, two having already been removed and the third awaiting removal.

At 31st December, 1952, only one nissen hut and the wooden bungalow are remaining.

At the Dog Lane Camp, regular maintenance is required to keep the dwellings in a habitable condition. Misuse of the sanitary accommodation involves frequent attention and repairs to the conveniences and drainage system.

Refuse

House refuse is collected weekly in the town and once every fortnight in the outlying areas.

In addition to house refuse, trade refuse is collected and disposed of, the average collection amounting to 15 cwts. weekly.

The provision of new dustbins to replace old and worn bins is presenting some difficulty, as the existing legislation does not clearly define whether the owner or the occupier is the responsible person. A number of court cases, some in neighbouring districts, have also failed to provide any satisfactory direction. It is to be hoped that amending legislation will be forthcoming to assist Local Authorities to enforce the provision of adequate regulation dustbins.

Rodent Control

During the year the following rodent infestations have been dealt with :—

Private dwellings	...	...	205
Business premises	...	...	6
Other infestations	...	...	2
Total		...	213

Inspection and Supervision of Food

Food premises were inspected regularly during the year and although the age of most of the properties generally presents difficulties in the modernizing and provision of the necessary facilities, a number of improvements were carried out.

It is gratifying to be able to again report that no cases of food poisoning were notified within the Borough, nor was any case, notified in any other area, referred to the Health Department for further enquiries.

Food stuffs condemned during the year included :—

Butter	50 lbs.
Canned Vegetables	17 lbs.
Canned Fruit	20 lbs.
Canned Meat and Fish ...	15½lbs.
Miscellaneous Foods stuffs, such as Soup, Sauces, Cakes, Cereals etc.	42 lbs.

Inspections

The following is a list of inspections carried out :—

Dwelling Houses	272
Verminous Houses	29
Infectious Disease	11
Factories	7
Food Premises	31
Licensed Premises	48
New Works	113
Rodent Infestation	23
Camping Sites	33
Nuisances	39
Drainage	121
Rehousing Applications	12
Water Supply	29
Miscellaneous	50
	818

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

S. J. ROWE,

Sanitary Inspector